

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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R 130434Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1118

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

S E C R E T MUSCAT 547

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: APER, MILI, AMGT, TC, QA, MU, BA

SUBJECT: PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF DAO IN LOWER GULF

REF: STATE 105450

1. EMBASSY'S POLICY ASSESSMENT (MUSCAT'S A-20) RECOMMENDS AGAINST DIRECT U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN OMAN AND SIMILARLY AGAINST POLICIES OR MEASURES WHICH MIGHT EITHER DEROGATE FROM ALLIED (UK, IRAN, JORDAN) EFFORTS OR LEAD OMANIS TO BELIEVE THAT USG WILLING TO PLAY SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED SECURITY ROLE. WE BELIEVE THIS REASONING LIKEWISE REFLECTS WASHINGTON VIEWS (NSSM 217). THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A DAO HERE WITHOUT AROUSING HOPES AND SUSPICIONS WHICH WOULD RUN COUNTER TO OUR PERCEIVED INTERESTS. OMANIS CORRECTLY WOULD INTERPRET DAO PRESENCE AS INDICATION OF GREATER USG ATTENTION TO MILITARY AFFAIRS, AND THEY WOULD EXPECT THIS TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY MORE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF OUR SUPPORT. THESE CONSIDERATIONS WOULD APPLY REGARDLESS OF VENUE OF PROPOSED "LOWER GULF" DAO.

2. SECOND ARGUMENT AGAINST CONSIDERING DAO POSITION SPECIFICALLY LOCATED HERE RELATES TO LOGISTIC DIFFICULTIES. DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF PROBLEMS WE FACE IN SUPPORTING STAFF

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IN MUSCAT; IN ADDITION, MUSCAT IS NOT A GOOD CENTER FOR TRAVEL

TO AND FROM OTHER COUNTRIES IN GULF.

3. EMBASSY MAINTAINS CLOSE CONTACT WITH CSAF AND OTHER DEFENSE OFFICIALS WHO FREELY AND FRANKLY HAVE BRIEFED US ON MILITARY AND SECURITY MATTERS. WE BELIEVE THAT WASHINGTON HAS BEEN KEPT ADEQUATELY INFORMED RE OMANI SIDE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN DHOFAR. IF MORE INFORMATION IS DESIRED, LOCAL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WOULD PROBABLY BE RECEPTIVE TO REQUEST FOR MORE FREQUENT BRIEFINGS.

4. ASSIGNMENT OF DAO FOR PURPOSES OF DIRECT CONTACT WITH OFFICERS IN FIELD HAS SOME APPEAL. HOWEVER, WE QUESTION WHETHER THIS WOULD MATERIALIZE. IRANIANS HAVE BEEN SHIELDED FROM CONTACT WITH OUTSIDERS ON ORDERS FROM TEHRAN. WE APPRECIATE GOOD FEEDBACK ON JORDANIAN PARTICIPATION GENERATED BY EMBASSY AMMAN. CSAF LIKELY WOULD PREFER TO HAVE CONTACT WITH DAO THROUGH HEADQUARTERS LIAISON--I.E. ESSENTIALLY THE PRESENT SETUP. WE DOUBT OMANGOV WOULD GIVE DAO LAISSEZ PASSER TO WANDER AROUND DHOFAR, AND EVEN IF THEY WERE INCLINED TO DO SO, WE WOULD OBJECT ON POLICY GROUNDS TO FREQUENT VISITS OF THAT TYPE.

5. FINALLY, EMBASSY AGREES WITH INSPECTORS' CONSIDERATION THAT IT IS DESIRABLE TO ESTABLISH CLOSER CONTACT WITH MILITARY LEADERS. WE HAVE PROPOSED DEFENSE VISITOR'S PROGRAMS TO HELP FULFILL THIS NEED (MUSCAT'S A-30) AND ALSO RECOMMENDED IN POLICY ASSESSMENT THAT FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO APPROPRIATE MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS IN U.S.

6. WITH FOREGOING IN MIND, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AGAINST ESTABLISHMENT OF DAO OPERATION FOR OMAN AT THIS TIME.
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